available for filling up the post. I may also add for the information of hon. Members that the term of another officer just below this officer, who is a Malayali, is also extended like this for more than a year.

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP: Sir, I did not put my previous question because the Officer was a Malayalee or a Tamilian. I merely wanted to know the principle followed in this matter. So, I feel that the Hon. Minister's observation in this regard is not in good taste. 9-30 a.m.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: I do not know about tastes. I simply wanted to point out that there was no discrimination in the matter between one officer and another.

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM: Sir, I am not concerned whether the Officer was a North Indian or South Indian or whether he was a Tamilian or a Malayalee. I am only concerned with the fact that he is a human-being. To my first question, the Hon. Minister replied that there was dearth of qualified persons in the department. Later on, he said that it is not merely educational qualification but also experience has to be taken into consideration. My information is that there are officers who have been working in the department, who have sufficient experience and good qualifications also. May I know why their cases should not be considered?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: Barring this Chief Conservator, there are Conservators working under him. The next seniormost Conservator is one I have referred to in my previous answer. He also attains superannuation. Below them, there are Conservators who have not even two years' service.

Foreign markets for hides and skins

* 89 *Q.*—SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM: Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state whether the Government have made any proposal to the Union Government for finding foreign markets for the export of hides and skins?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: No, Sir, as the Union Government are themselves taking steps for the promotion of export.

Export of rice to Ceylon

* 90 *Q.*—SRI N. K. PALANISAMY: Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether there is any proposal to export rice to Ceylon from this State; and

(*b*) if so, the quantity and the rate of the same?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: (*a*) No, Sir.

(*b*) Does not arise.